



Update from the State Data Center - December 10, 2020

Census Bureau Releases New American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

DEC. 10, 2020 — Today the U.S. Census Bureau released new 5-year statistics. For the first time, data from the 2015-2019 American Community Survey (ACS) will allow users to compare three nonoverlapping sets of 5-year data: 2005-2009, 2010-2014 and 2015-2019. The ability to analyze separate datasets is important for identifying trends for small communities and geographies which is critical for planning future investments and services.

"This release marks an important milestone for the ACS program, which has provided communities with detailed information about people, places and the economy for the last 15 years," said Donna Daily, Chief, American Community Survey Office. "Having three sets of nonoverlapping data allows researchers and leaders across the country to analyze long-term trends, creating a powerful image of communities across the nation."

The ACS is the nation's leading source of large and small area socioeconomic and demographic statistics for all levels of geography for every community in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. ACS data provides public officials, community leaders, business owners, researchers and others with detailed information helping them to plan for the future.

Beginning in 2006, ACS 1-year estimates have been released annually for geographic areas with populations of 65,000 and greater. Beginning in 2010, ACS 5-year estimates have been released annually for all geographies down to the block-group level. ACS 1-year and 5-year estimates are period estimates that represent data collected within particular intervals of time — 12 months and 60 months, respectively. These statistics would not be possible without the participation of the randomly selected households in the survey.

Because it is a survey based on a sample of the population rather than a census of the entire population, the ACS produces estimates with sampling error. To aid data users, the Census Bureau calculates and publishes a measure of the sampling error — the margin of error — for every estimate.

The State Data Center in Iowa will be updating all of its reports using the American Community Survey 5-year estimates over the next month and half. If you are looking for an updated report before then, please contact my office.

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